

durably it preserves the records committed to its keeping.

The clay of the potter ministers to the earliest material wants of social and civilized man, through his cooking instinct. The press ministers to his spiritual and intellectual wants. May not the nineteenth century, an age of whose mighty inventions the mightiest is the infant art of combining and distributing, for the good of the many, the material and spiritual productions of the few, effect such a combination of the clay and the printing type as may supply these two pressing needs of the people?—the material want of wholesome sepulture, the spiritual want of preserving the name, the memory, and the resting-place of the dead.

JACOB.

The idea of a terra cotta tombstone is new in this country, and no doubt if properly glazed it would be as durable as any other material, but the great advantage, as it appears to me, is this: a great degree of elegance of form and ornamentation could be attained at comparatively little expense. What is particularly new in this project is the application of moveable type for the purpose of impressing inscriptions in the soft clay, afterwards to be rendered durable by baking, for as to impressing inscriptions on the clay and then baking them, the Babylonish bricks and cylinders testify to a considerable antiquity. It is curious, also, that the idea of the application of moveable type should follow—as in the case of printing—after the first process had been so long practised.

J. BONOMI.

THE BUILDING REFEREES' COURT.

IN your paper of last week there was a notice of a deputation to the office of Woods on that vexed subject, the "New Metropolitan Buildings' Act," in which not only the threatened abatement of the referees was strongly objected to, but a suggestion was thrown out that the referees should sit in open court as magistrates do, and that the registrar should act as the clerk in the police courts, giving his legal advice when required, and keeping the records of the proceedings. This would greatly simplify the business, and be highly satisfactory to the public, and is a course which had long ago occurred to me as well as others.

The present system is of a piece with the act itself, complicated and unsatisfactory; and the style of correspondence adopted, and tone of proceeding, remind one of Cardinal Wolsey and his "*Ego et Rex meus*," with this difference, that the cardinal had but one king to dictate to, but here there are three. The sittings at this office always present to my mind a *tableau vivant* of the Inquisition, as represented in the plates to the History of that institution; and the costliness of the machinery—two of the board with salaries of the millenium period and two—of the *cinque cents*, besides their satellites,—seems to be far beyond the requirements of the business, and with this formidable array and ceremony some of the cases brought before them appear like breaking a fly upon the wheel.

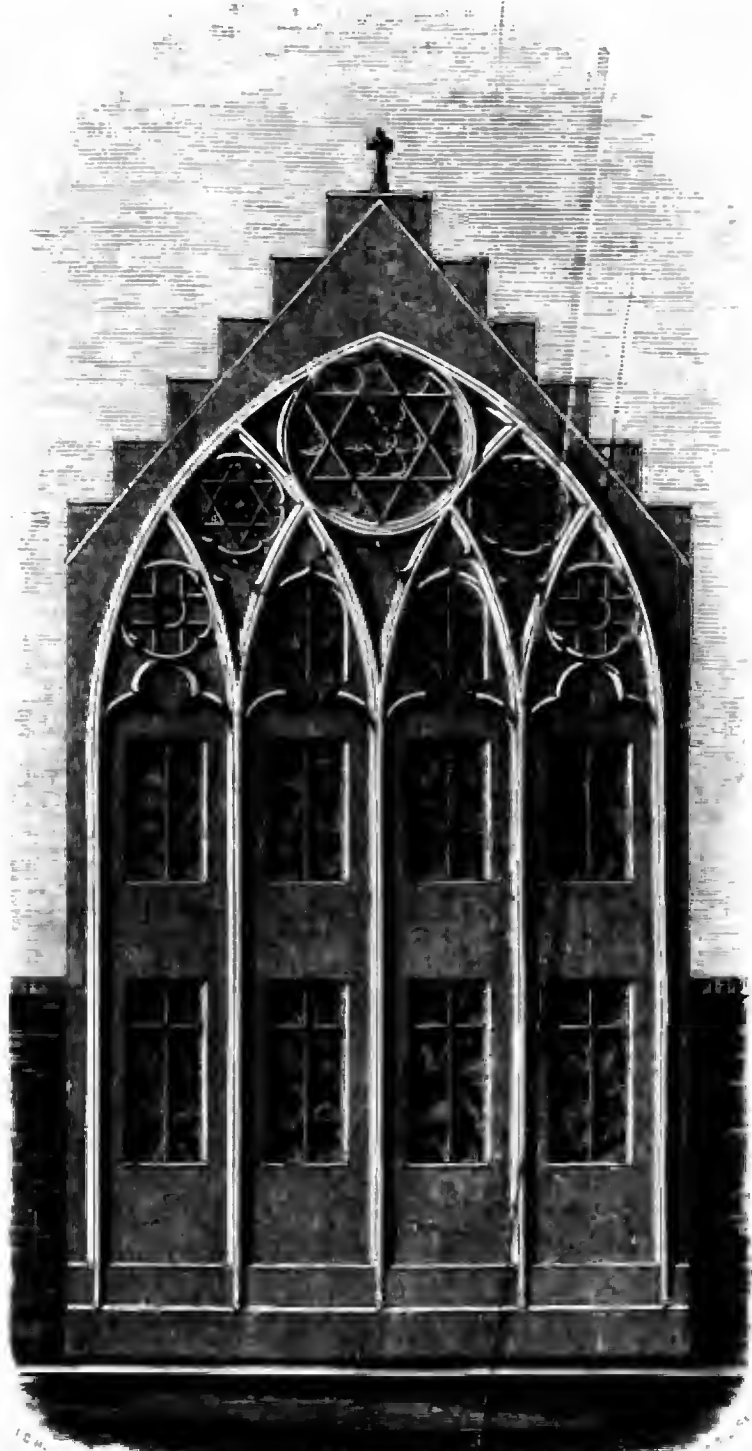
I trust this suggestion of taking the police courts as a model will not be lost sight of, but be seriously considered in framing the new act.

OLIM.

SELISH ART.—It is said that Mr. Wyon, R.A., has been commissioned by the East-India Company to prepare a die for a gold medal to be presented to Major Edwards, in acknowledgment of the services rendered by that officer during the recent war in the East; that as it is intended solely for the Major, the die will be destroyed as soon as the medal is struck, so that no duplicate shall exist. We hope the latter part of this statement is incorrect, and that national collections will, at all events, be permitted to have impressions. How much more flattering to the Major it would be to put his head on the medal, and distribute it pretty extensively, than thus to misapply the process of medal die-sinking.

EXHIBITION OF ENGRAVINGS.—The Society of Artists at Birmingham mean to have one of their rooms set apart this year exclusively for engravings by artists trained in the Birmingham School.

ANCIENT HOUSE-FRONT, LOUVAIN.



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THERE is great variety in the domestic architecture of Belgium, arising partly from the ancient division of the provinces, but chiefly from the diversity of building materials available in the different localities. Thus, in Flanders, where there is no stone and but little wood, brick buildings predominate; about Liege and the eastern parts of the country another character is imparted to the houses by the plentiful use of stone; whilst in Brabant and the midland parts, brick, wood, and stone are used indifferently.

Examples of stone buildings from Mechlin and Ghent have appeared in recent numbers

of THE BUILDER: we shall now give specimens of brick. The accompanying sketch is from Louvain, and we shall hereafter give one from Bruges.

These houses are built of a very fine red brick, not moulded, but cut and rubbed: many of them have the front walls tied in with iron, the heads of which are wrought sometimes into fleur-de-lis or scrolls, and at others into Arabic numerals expressing the date of the building. Scarcely any of these houses have chimney-pots, but the shaft is carried up some height above the roof, and finished with bricks and pantiles, the arrangement of which is often ingenious and picturesque.

J. G. H.